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WORK AND PLAY.

By Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc.

II.

WE spoke of the necessity to work, which is the common lot. This necessity has a good side and a bad side. Look first at the good side. Work makes a change in the world, and it makes a change in the worker too. This latter change is the most important of all. It is part of the great general law of life, that there can be no growth without effort and exercise. This is true of every gift, faculty and power of ours. The child grows to be a man only because of the energy it puts forth; and activity and effort alone can improve the man. You know this well enough about muscular work. It is just as true of brain work. Thinking develops the brain, increases its power; and the strengthened brain makes new and clearer thoughts possible. Physical work makes the man physically fit, and mental work makes him mentally fit. Work makes the artist, the musician, the author, the philanthropist. Work is a condition of all the highest and finest things of which we can dream, and the man who is delivered from the necessity of work is thereby sentenced to mediocrity, sentenced to a condition of undeveloped personality and power.

And while work changes and improves the worker, it also changes and improves the world. We can trace this even in the distant past.

Some of the most interesting discoveries in the way of relics of the human race in its earliest state, are specimens of attempts at drawing, found by modern men in caves and elsewhere, preserved for tens of thousands of years. These show that the first attempts at art consisted in scratching with some sharp instrument (perhaps a flint) on the tusk of an elephant or the bone of some large animal, or in marking rude figures on the wall of a cave. It was the dawn of the sense of beauty, the feeling that many things in the world were fine to look at and that it would be well to picture them as well as to remember them. But the attempt to express the sense of beauty increased until it demanded better things,—something finer and more beautiful. So step by step the advance was made until, from the rude beginnings of which I have spoken, you have the wonderful

creations in painting and sculpture which men accomplished in later times. The power of the workers and the results of their work alike grew greater *because and only because they tried.*

Perhaps this art illustration will not appeal to every one. Then turn your thoughts to what we call civilisation, and the discovery and invention on which it depends. Ten thousand years ago this earth was a jungle, inhabited by barbarous tribes dragging out a precarious existence by the seashore or the banks of rivers or lakes, exposed to all kinds of dangers, from wild beasts and from their own ignorance and inexperience. Contrast with this the world as man has subdued it to his purposes to-day. The difference between the world then and the world now corresponds to the difference between man then and man now. The world has been transformed externally and man transformed within by the labour which has enabled him to accomplish these results,—labour of brain and of hand, of the men who thought and planned and the men who executed.

Or open an elementary text-book on science,—Geology or Astronomy, for instance. You can buy it for a shilling and children can learn it. But the simple statements of fact which it contains are the result of centuries of toil and effort accomplished, sometimes of struggle, persecution, pain, and death endured by successive generations of men.

When you realise all this, our infinite debt to the labour of the men and women of the past, you realise the position of the man who, not being compelled to work, does not do anything. It will mark a step upwards in the progress of the world when such a man is regarded with general disfavour and contempt, whatever his so-called rank in life may be.

Some men have the inner impulse to work even without the pressure of outward necessity; but they are not the majority. The compulsion is a blessing rather than a curse. And the presence of an idle rich class, delivered from any such compulsion, is from the point of view of economic science, no use whatever to the country, and from the moral point of view is a public danger. I do not speak of the rich who give themselves, in some genuine way, to the public service or the general welfare. I speak of those who are unchivalrous *faineants* in relation to the social and political problems which press for solution; and above all of those who are content, in heartlessness and selfishness, to give themselves up to the thoughtless pursuits and conventions of their "set."

These people not only injure themselves, as a finely-made and complicated machine would be injured if it became rusty and worthless through disuse. They fail to fulfil one of the first conditions of an honest life. I quote a judgment on this matter, uttered in the hearing of a large and wealthy audience in New York, which I believe you will feel to be entirely just:—

"The world in this twentieth century has laid up in store what seems an enormous aggregate of accumulated wealth, so that it would seem we are far from poverty. But if we should cease the production of the means for living, the world would begin to starve within two or three years at the very furthest. It is only continual and practically universal work, then, that keeps the world living, keeps it going. I say, then, that the man who does not work must necessarily fail to put anything into the world's wealth. If he does not by productive work of brain or hand put in at least an equivalent for what he takes out for his own use, he is a thief,—I care not what his position in the world may be. He may be unconscious of the fact, but fact it is, and if a man wishes to be a little better than merely to escape the accusation of being a thief, he will try to put back into the common stock a little more than he takes out. He will want to leave the world not poorer than it was when he was born; and so he will add a little to its store because he has been living in it." Rendering some equivalent, adding to the world's welfare in some way, is the only honest condition for any human being.

LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

[In connection with the Scheme of Systematic Instruction for the Sunday Schools of the Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Association, 1908-9.]

IV.

By Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D.

Second Passage (*Isaiah xlix.* 1–6).

Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far: The Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

And said unto me. Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; *yet* surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

This passage is at once seen to be closely connected in thought with Isaiah xlii. 1–4. There is this difference: In the latter passage Yahweh speaks about his Servant and how he has chosen and equipped him to be his instrument in making known his truth to all the nations. But in Isaiah xlix. 1–6 the Servant speaks about himself, and addresses in person the nations of the world he wishes to influence. The first three verses repeat from the Servant's point of view what we were told about him in our last lesson, viz.: that Yahweh both selected and prepared him for his great task. Now, however, he makes it plain that this is no recent development, but one in the divine plan from the very first. From earliest times the Servant was called with this great purpose in view, the preaching of salvation to the ends of the earth. Yet although Yahweh always thought of him in this way he kept his purpose hidden until the time was fulfilled. This thought is expressed in a telling way, especially when we think of the warlike times in which the prophet lived. He compares the Servant to an arrow which the bowman has placed in his quiver ready for an emergency. No sooner does the right occasion prompt than it is produced from the place where hitherto it was hidden securely away. But the thought of what the Servant is specially called to do suggests a second warlike metaphor. His function is to speak, to utter a divine message. In order that he might do this with due effect, Yahweh has made his mouth like a sharp sword. That is, Yahweh has placed his word in the mouth of his Servant, he has given him the fearless, effective utterance of the true prophet.

Now the new thought in this passage, *i.e.*, that Yahweh *from the very beginning* had chosen Israel for his Servant, does not stand alone. It has its parallels in other parts of the Bible, and they are all the more instructive when they show how the greatest of God's servants look upon their calling as beginning with their birth. Jeremiah informs us in striking language that even before birth he was ordained to be Yahweh's prophet unto the nations (*Jer.* i. 5). Paul furnishes an even closer parallel to the thought of Isaiah. At the hour of birth he is separated by God to do His work. For a long time the divine purpose is known only to God himself, but at last, when the proper time had arrived, "it pleased God . . . . to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen" (*Galatians* i. 15–16). It is easy to see that in these and similar cases the writer is profoundly impressed by the thought of God's knowledge and its all-embracing character. Nowhere has that thought found more beautiful expression than in the words of the 139th Psalm: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted

with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me" (*Ps. cxxxix.* 1–5). If we believe that God knows everything we cannot escape the same conclusion, viz.: that God must be acquainted with all that has to do with individual experience. He knows not only what concerns us now but all which has concerned us from the beginning. But the thought is frequently carried further. If God knew all that was to happen in any individual case, and allowed it to happen, then it must have happened because he willed it and because he had always in mind the fulfilment of his purpose. Apply this line of thought to one verse of the Psalm quoted above. The Psalmist says: "There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether" (*Ps. cxxxix.* 4). Yes, says the prophet, God not only knows every word now, He had it in mind from the beginning. He willed it to be, and by placing that word in the mouth of Israel, his Servant, he made clear his intention of appointing him to be the organ of his salvation to the ends of the earth (*Is. xlix.* 5–6).

When God is thus emphasised as the source of the living Word, it becomes impossible for pride or self-satisfaction to mar the true prophet's work. Thus even he who spoke as no other men spake is constrained to say: "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (*John xiv.* 24). And yet it sometimes happens that the one who is thus ordained by God to do His work finds the bearing of a divine message almost too great a burden for mortal strength. So it is with the Servant of Yahweh, as he tells us in the following verse: "Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God" (*Is. xlix.* 4). As he looks at the past he is for the moment troubled by his apparent failure, and yet his faith still survives. He will leave his work in God's hands and abide by His judgment. Such faith is speedily justified. Yahweh reveals to him a still greater mission. At first his task had to do with the tribes of Jacob, and with the in-gathering of all their members. Now Yahweh makes it clear that the Servant is called to be the mediator of salvation to all mankind. This finds expression in the words: "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (*Is. xlix.* 6). But does it not seem strange that a greater mission is entrusted to the Servant who believed himself to have laboured in vain when engaged in a much smaller mission? Further, how could this fill the Servant with greater courage? The answers to both these questions are to be found in the fact that Yahweh has revealed his purpose still more clearly. The Servant despaired for a time because uncertain of the real nature of his task. But once assured that it is indeed a divine task—and the very magnitude of a task that comprises the salvation of all mankind carries with it a proof of its divinity—the thought of failure cannot remain. In the light of this wider vision of the service to which Yahweh calls him temporary disappointment cannot exist. All that sense of failure associated with a limited and but imperfectly understood mission disappears as he perceives Yahweh's supreme purpose more clearly. It is no light thing to be Yahweh's Servant, yet it is easier to be that than to suppose that a task upon which God has set his heart can fail of final accomplishment. Thus the Servant merges any thought of imperfect human means in the still greater thought of a perfect divine end; realising as Paul was able to realise at a later period that the divine strength is made perfect in human weakness (*II. Cor. xii.* 9).

It is said of the leaves on a tree, that you will scarcely find two perfectly alike, and thus, among a thousand men, you will scarce find two who harmonise entirely in their views and ways of thinking.—*Goethe.*

ALL SOULS' CHURCH, BELFAST.

Bicentenary Celebrations.

THE long history of the Second Congregation in Belfast and the prominent part it has taken in the life of the city for the past two centuries, have just been celebrated, and the proceedings have evoked not only the enthusiasm of the present congregation, but many welcome signs of interest and sympathy among the general public.

On Saturday afternoon, October 3rd, the new hall, henceforward to be known as Rosemary Hall, was opened in beautiful weather by Mrs. W. H. Drummond. There was a large gathering of friends, who joined first of all in the simple service of dedication conducted by the Revs. T. Dunkerley and W. H. Drummond, and then in a chorus of congratulations upon the beauty of the hall and the excellence of its arrangements. On Sunday, October 4th, special services of thanksgiving and commemoration were held in the church. The Rev. E. I. Fripp had promised to preach the morning sermon, but at the last moment he was kept away by illness. Mr. Drummond accordingly took his place and spoke from the words, "O all ye holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord, praise him and magnify him for ever." It was a great pleasure that the Rev. J. C. Street was well enough to be present. At the close of the sermon he spoke a few words from the lectern with special reference to the unveiling of the Memorial of the History of the Congregation and its ministers, which has been placed upon the west wall of the church. After a prayer of dedication, the memorial was unveiled by Mr. John Greenfield, the oldest member of the congregation. It is a very striking piece of artistic work, and adds a mellow charm to a church already remarkable for its beauty. Mr. Charles Braithwaite, who is responsible for the lettering and illumination, is a craftsman of excellent taste and skill, and this memorial should win for him much wider recognition. At four o'clock the church was again filled for a musical service, when the choir sang Mendelssohn's "Hear my Prayer," and other sacred music with fine taste and feeling. At the seven o'clock service Mr. Drummond preached again to a large congregation on "Memories and Hopes."

On Monday evening, October 5th, there was a soiree in Rosemary Hall, which was very largely attended. Dr. John Campbell was in the chair. A noteworthy feature of the evening was the reading by Mr. Drummond of a series of letters from eminent men who were unable to be present. The President of the Queen's College sent his congratulations and good wishes "ex imo pectore." The Dean of Belfast wrote a cordial letter of regret, the Rev. R. W. Seaver, rector of St. John's, and the Rev. William Park, Rosemary Street Presbyterian Church, wrote in the same spirit. Dr. John Hunter, of Trinity Congregational Church, Glasgow, sent the following message: "Your open trust is a precious and sacred inheritance which I hope will ever be guarded until better days dawn, with unsleeping vigilance and holy jealousy. Your freedom is a great opportunity, and I rejoice that you and your fellow-workers are making use of it in order to build up in Belfast a church that seeks to be simply Christian and wants no narrower name." The Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple, who preached last May in All Souls' Church, wrote: "I am greatly interested to observe that All Souls' Church is about to celebrate its bi-centenary. Such a record of long and honourable service in the cause of liberal Christianity is so uncommon that I trust you will permit me to join in the expressions of good-will you must be receiving from near and far. The day of denominationalism is drawing to a close, but that of a freer and more Catholic Christianity is dawning. I hope the future of your church may be even more useful and inspiring than its past." Other notable letters were from Principal Carpenter and Dr. Drummond.

It was a special pleasure to welcome among the speakers during the evening the Rev. D. Purves, D.D., of Elmwood Presbyterian Church. His presence was a practical demonstration of the way in which co-operation in the Social Mission of the Church is helping to break down barriers and create a new atmosphere of sympathy. Among the other speakers were the Rev. J. C. Street, who spoke with unabated energy and fire, the Rev. H. J. Rossington, and Mr. S. S. Millin, B.L., the historian of the congregation, who gave a brief sketch of the part which the Second Congregation has played in the public life of Belfast. Considerable trouble had been taken by the secretary, Mr. A. Millin, with the able co-operation of Mr. John Vinycomb, M.R.I.A., in the collection and arrangement of various objects of interest connected with the history of the congregation. The portraits were hung on the walls of the committee room and glass cases filled with other precious relics were placed on the platform. It was a memorable occasion, full of happy assurance that with its equipment of buildings and precious memorials All Souls' Church means to be ready for the duties and opportunities of the new times.—*From "The Inquirer."*

For the Children.

LITTLE FOXES.

[CONTINUED]

By Miss Mellone.

Every child, I think, would like to have a real garden, in which it could sow seeds, and watch the little plants growing, and at last gather the flowers to give to the mother. Unfortunately, all the children in the world have not gardens, and so they cannot all have this delight. But every child that ever lived in this world had a mind of its own, a little garden of the soul, in which all sorts of plants could be grown. Our business in life is to take care that only good seeds shall be sown in our minds, and that they shall be cared for, so that they can spring and grow up, and bear sweet flowers and good fruit. If we do this, we shall be of use to all the people about us, and shall be able to please them too, just as a garden full of flowers and fruit is a pleasure to all who see it. But we must take care that no mischievous little foxes get into our minds, to spoil all the plants growing there. You see it was not the big wild animals that did most harm to the vineyards. Sometimes a great bear might make his way in, if the gardener had been very careless, and had left the fence or hedge in such bad order that the great beast could tear a big hole, and then the harm he would do in the vineyard would be dreadful, for he would trample down all the poor vines, and break the poles on which they were growing. But most of the harm was done by the little creatures getting in through any little hole that the gardener had not noticed, or if he had, had thought it of no consequence. Now is that not just like ourselves? Sometimes it may be some great evil that takes possession of our minds, such as passion, and we may spoil our whole life through a fit of furious bad temper. But this does not happen very often, happily. Every child knows it is wrong to give way to that wild animal that we call passion. But there are small mischiefs that we do not notice so soon, not until much harm has been done, and much of the good that we might do in the world spoilt through these little things. There are so many of these little foxes, we can only look at one or two. There is a little fox that seems rather a nice creature until you get to know what harm he does. He does not actually nibble the plants so much, but he makes holes in the fence of the vineyard, through which other more dangerous companions can come. He has different names, but he is often called "Carelessness." I had once a very clever dear little boy to teach, who had let this little fox get into his mind. It spoilt both his work and his

play; he did his sums wrongly, not because he did not know how to do them, but because he took down the figures wrong, or mistook shillings for pence; or if he were building a house with his bricks, he would place one or two of the bricks so carelessly that the whole building was unsteady, and would often fall in ruin before it was half done. Then there is another fox, an ugly disagreeable looking one this, called "Fault-finding." Everybody knows and dislikes him, but somehow he gets in to the mind, and spoils the vines that bear the sweet fruits of good temper, of cheerfulness, of kindness. One curious thing about this fox is that we can see him at once in anybody else's garden, but often fail to discover him in our own. I have only time to notice one more, and he is far worse than the other two. He is a sly, mean little fellow, who creeps about and hides himself, and spoils all the best vines in the garden. If not caught or turned out he may grow into a big fierce fox, spoiling the whole vineyard. His name is "Selfishness." He is very ugly, and very hard to turn out of the garden. He spoils all our own pleasure in what we do or have, and makes us want to spoil other people's happiness too. Have you seen sparrows in winter, fighting over crumbs? Sometimes a selfish greedy bird will seize the biggest crumb it can see. Then, catching sight of another with what it thinks is a still bigger bit of bread, the greedy thing will drop the crumb it has, and go in chase of the other, often losing both. That is the way with selfish people, they often lose the good things they have, in trying to grasp, not only their own share, but somebody else's as well. They cannot enjoy their own pleasures, for thinking that somebody else has more than they. They let the little fox nibble at the root of all their vines, and so there is no fruit, for themselves or for any other.

Now what is to be done about these little foxes? It is so very hard to drive them out of the vineyard, when once they have found a way in. It is best to try to prevent them getting in; and the only way to do this is to put our whole mind into what we are doing. The child who puts his whole self into his work or his play will not be careless over it, for he will find it so full of interest that he will not be inclined to shirk any little trouble over the small things that make all the difference in the world to the result of our work. If we are busy looking out for the patch of blue sky, or for the flowers along the road, we shall not have time to grumble so much at the clouds or the dusty road. Then the evil spirit of fault-finding will not find a way into our minds, nor will the selfish spirit gain entrance, if we are always ready to do those little deeds of kindness, of which the hymn tells. So if we feel inclined at any time to think that the little bit of temper, or the cross word, or the unkind act, does not matter because it is so little, we should think of the little foxes who got into the vineyard and did such harm there.

THE ORPHAN SOCIETY.

The quarterly meeting of the Governors in connection with the Orphan Society of the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians and other Free Christians was held on 15th October, in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, Belfast. Rev. James Kennedy occupied the chair. The minutes of previous meeting having been confirmed and accounts ordered to be paid, the Governors proceeded to approve the replies sent to the Educational Endowments Commission. The orphans already on the fund were re-elected, and the following, whose applications came before the Governors on this occasion, were admitted to the benefits of the Society:—M. and H. Boal, Dromore; Jane and James Magowan, Moneyrea; W. Martin, Dromore; J., W., A., and A. Reid, Templepatrick; E., J., and A. Stevenson, Antrim; G., E., and S. Simpson, Moneyrea; E., I., G., and E. Wilkinson, Moira; M., J., W., and L. Young, Comber. After the election some routine business brought the meeting to a close.

TEMPERANCE.

IN connection with the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians and Other Free Christians temperance meetings were held on 21st October, in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street. The meetings, which were convened by the Rev. G. J. Slipper, of Moneyrea, were well attended by the members of the Association and friends interested in temperance work. In the afternoon a conference of temperance workers was held under the presidency of Rev. Thomas Dunkerley. Rev. Joseph Worthington read a paper on "The Aims of Temperance Workers." Mrs. Slipper, Miss Davidson, and Revs. H. J. Rossington, W. H. Drummond, W. Weatherall, J. A. Kelly, and E. Thompson took part in the discussion which followed.

A public meeting was held at eight o'clock, the chair being taken by the Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc. (president of the Association). The hymn "From all that dwell below the skies" having been sung, the Rev. J. A. Kelly offered up prayer.

Rev. G. J. Slipper announced letters of apology for non-attendance from Rev. Alexander Ashworth and Rev. Edgar Lockett (Banbridge).

The Chairman, who was well received, said they were invited there as being interested in temperance work, and in what was spoken of in a large way as the temperance movement. Of course, that was a movement that could be approached from many different points of view. The promoters were not able to lay before the meeting a definite programme, nor were they inclined to ask them to pass a series of resolutions, but he thought so far as they were alive enough to the possible needs of the time they would have a real interest in the temperance cause, and would find that to have different aspects of it spoken of, as they would have that evening, would conduce to a better understanding of the question and a greater willingness to incur the trouble of practical work in conjunction with others. He would like to see a better understanding between convinced abstainers and the people who were described as moderate drinkers—temperate people, but non-abstainers. Constantly they found a deplorable waste of effort owing to misunderstanding between these parties in regard to things where they might be at one. In reforms directed to decrease the opportunities for excessive drinking and reforms of social conditions in city life it seemed to him abstainers and non-abstainers ought to be able to work shoulder to shoulder and hand to hand. Speaking of what one might do by personal effort, Dr. Mellone asked what would be the sense of attempting to carry out such work on any other than a total abstinence basis. The mere fact of habit, the fact that all human beings were in danger of being captivated in chains of habit, was of itself enough to show that for countless numbers of their brothers and sisters there was only one safe condition for those aiming at their salvation, and that was total abstinence.

Mr. Duncan Kirkwood said it was a great source of comfort to any one who had been trying in a little way to help them to know that they had gone forward considerably during the past 100 years. Indeed, during the last 70 years things had improved immensely, and one of the greatest factors in that improvement had been total abstinence. But while there was an aristocracy of the democracy there was another section of working people that were foul-mouthed, lazy, and drunken. Why was this? Both classes had the same opportunities, and the same wage-earning powers. One could sum it up in one word—drink.

Rev. H. J. Rossington said they could do much with the children. They could bring them up in good habits and confirm them in those habits. They had also to do all they could to break habits which had already been formed. How could they do that? In the cities they had refined wholesome forms of amusement, which did something to check intemperance, but very much of the

intemperance in the country places was due to the fact that life was monotonous there being no rational amusement for the people.

Rev. J. J. Magill said the object of their meeting was to start the winter's work of their Churches, and he thought there would go forth from it an expression which would bear much fruit both in the city and country. Total abstinence produced enthusiasm, and in that great work to which they had put their hands there was nothing more necessary than enthusiasm. Whilst moderate drinking was good, total abstinence was better.

Rev. S. Evans Bowen also spoke, referring to what the Government was doing to lessen the evils connected with the drink, and pointing out what might be done to save the young people from the influence of the traffic.

During the evening Miss Jellie gave an admirable rendering of Liszt's well-known and ever-popular piano solo, "Liebestraum," all the sentiment intended to be expressed by the composer being brought out with great beauty and effect. Later on she acquitted herself with no less ability by her playing of Henselt's "Si Oiseau j'etais," and won highest appreciation. Miss Magowan, a vocalist who is rapidly making a name for herself in the city, sang very beautifully "Voices of the Angels" and "Summer Rain" (Willoby), and met with a reception eminently gratifying.

On the motion of Mr. C. J. M'Kisack seconded by Rev. J. A. Kelly, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to the Chairman for presiding, and to the speakers, and artistes, also to Miss Patterson and Miss Davidson for acting as teamakers, after which the proceedings terminated.

REPORTS.

Antrim.—The Old Presbyterian Congregation of Antrim has lately sustained a loss by the death of Mr. James Semple, formerly of Rickamore, Templepatrick, but latterly of Antrim. Mr. Semple, who was advanced in years, was originally a farmer, but becoming afflicted with rheumatism, he relinquished farming and eventually settled in Antrim, where he was for upwards of thirteen years an interested member of the Old Congregation. Though unable for about ten years to attend the services he took a lively interest in all that concerned the welfare of the Congregation, and was always ready to share in its pecuniary responsibilities; and when settling his worldly affairs was not forgetful of it and that of Templepatrick also. Rev. W. S. Smith conducted the service at the house, and was assisted by Rev. A. Turner at the grave.

Belfast.—First Church.—On Sunday, October 11th, there seemed no falling off in the interest taken in the Harvest Festival and Sunday School Anniversary of the above Church, for although many similar gatherings were being held in Belfast the attendances were very good at the three services. Many willing hands had helped in the work of decoration and the very tasteful result reflected great credit on those concerned. The Minister (the Rev. H. J. Rossington) was in charge of the services and in the morning took his text from Isaiah xxviii. 24–26. In the afternoon the children were in a majority, the Stanhope Street Mission and Mountpottinger scholars and teachers being present, and thus making the service of a united character. The preacher therefore dealt not so much with harvest thanksgivings as with the nature and aim of Sunday School work, basing his address on the incident of Ruth gleaning in the field, and deducing therefrom the lesson that the children were "Gleaners in God's Harvest Field." In the evening the church was crowded, and the persons present had the opportunity of hearing an augmented choir render most efficiently Spohr's Cantata, "God, Thou art great," and Mendelssohn's "Hear my Prayer." The manner in which these works were given reflected great credit on the organist and choirmaster, Mr. Arthur Davis, F.R.C.O. and should ensure a good attendance at his first Organ Recital on Friday, Oct-

ober 23rd. During the service the Minister announced for the Sunday evenings in November a course of special sermons entitled "Some Features of a Liberal Faith," to deal with the following specific themes:—(1) "Its View of the Bible"; (2) "Its Conception of God"; (3) "Its Attitude towards Jesus"; (4) "Its Ideal of a Church"; (5) "Its Outlook upon Humanity."

Downpatrick.—In Downpatrick First Presbyterian Non-Subscribing Church harvest thanksgiving services were held on Sunday, September 27th. The church was beautifully decorated for the occasion. The pulpit was wreathed in greenery and flowers, and in front was a dais covered with fruit and palms. The pillars were encircled with corn-wreaths mingled with flowers, and the front of the galleries entwined with corn studded with dahlias, the effect being light and graceful. Adorning the walls were two anchors and a cornucopia, which poured forth grapes and flowers from its moss-covered mouth. Appropriate mottoes stretched here and there across the galleries and walls, one of which indicated, by the figures 1710–1908, the age of the Church, which is approaching its bi-centenary. The preacher was the Rev. Alexander Neill Edinburgh, a minister of the Church of Scotland, who gave in the morning an able and eloquent sermon on the lessons of the harvest from the words, "Seed-time and harvest shall not cease." In the evening an audience drawn from all the Protestant denominations in the town completely filled the ground floor of the Church, and by their close attention showed that they highly appreciated the earnest and practical discourses on the text, "Our sufficiency is of God." Special hymns were sung, and an anthem at each service, that in the morning being "I will extoll Thee, my God, O King," and in the evening, "O praise the Lord all ye nations." The offertories were the largest ever received on this anniversary. The ladies of the congregation return their thanks to the many friends who sent corn, flowers, and other materials for decoration.

Glenarm. — Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in the above Church on Sunday, October 18th, at 3 p.m., when the Rev. Alex. O. Ashworth, Belfast, delivered an eloquent and practical discourse from Luke xii. and portion of 27th verse. Miss M. Pullen sang very sweetly the solo "Consider the lilies." Hymns appropriate to the harvest season were well rendered by the Choir. The interior of the building was tastefully decorated for the occasion by the young people of the congregation with grain, flowers, and fruit, and presented a very attractive appearance. The services were continued on Monday evening, when Rev. J. A. Miskimmin (*pastor loci*) preached to a good congregation from the text Genesis viii., 22nd verse, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Miss Pullen rendered the solo, "He wipes the tear from every eye."

Larne and Kilwaughter.—On Sunday, 11th October, Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held here. The morning congregation, composed almost exclusively of members, some of whom live almost five miles away, was very good, few pews being altogether unoccupied. In the evening most of the pews were filled to overflowing, many neighbours of other denominations being in attendance. Specimens of fruit, flowers, vegetables and grain, as well as of greenhouse plants contributed by members of the Congregation symbolised in concrete form gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, while organ and choir voiced the same feeling in suitable hymns, chants, etc. The anthem, "Angel voices ever singing," (Rev. E. Vine Hall), was charmingly rendered by the choir; the solo in this anthem was taken by Mr. Whelan, Mr. Holmes, the organist of the Church, leading with his customary refinement and skill. Mr. Holmes also contributed in a manner highly appreciated the following items on the Crawford organ, viz.: "Harvest Festival March" (James), introducing

the hymn tune "Grafenburg"—"We Plough the Fields and Scatter"; "Siciliano" (Calkin); and "Coronation Anthem" (Handel), arranged for the organ by Dr. Spark. Rev. James Kennedy conducted divine service and preached morning and evening as usual.

Rademon. — Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held here on Sunday, September 27th, in beautiful weather, and on the following day, when rain had unfortunately returned to the great disappointment of the much-tried farmers whose grain was still in the fields. The Old Meeting-house looked very well, adorned as it was with the offerings of corn, vegetables, fruit and flowers sent in by members of the Congregation and friendly neighbours, and tastefully arranged by the willing hands of many of our young people. The attendances were satisfactory, that of the Sunday evening quite filling the large building. Dr. Mellone, of Holywood, was the preacher on Monday, and the hundred and twenty people present were much pleased with the appropriate address of our popular President.

Templepatrick.—On Sunday evening, 11th October, Harvest Thanksgiving Service was held in the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, Templepatrick. Members of the Congregation and other friends assembled on the previous evening and most tastefully decorated the Church with offerings of fruit and flowers which they had brought. The congregation on the occasion was one of the largest we have seen in Templepatrick; every available bit of space was occupied fifteen minutes before the service commenced, after which time many failed to gain admission. And the congregation was also remarkable for a close attention which never for one moment flagged from the beginning to the end. The singing of the hymns was of the heartiest description. The minister (Rev. A. Turner) preached from John xiii. 34. Miss May Dickson, of Belfast, sang "O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments" (Sullivan), and "God that madest earth and heaven" (Wilfrid Saunderson), in a way which gave great pleasure to all present. Mrs. Turner presided at the organ. The offertory was as usual excellent.

Unity Guild.—The fourth and last excursion of the summer season was held on Saturday, September 26th, the venue being Holywood. Owing to the unwelcome visitation by Jupiter Pluvius, the idea of walking from the tram terminus at Belmont had to be abandoned, and the party accordingly went down by rail motor as far as Kinnegar Halt. After alighting a visit was paid to Holywood House Dairy where the party was conducted over the buildings, having the different processes carefully explained and in some instances specially demonstrated for their benefit. Leaving here the party bravely faced the steady downpour and trudged on to Miss Praeger's studio in High Street, which was thrown open for our inspection. We were graciously received by the artist herself and an instructive ten minutes was easily passed. Following on this an adjournment was made to the schoolroom where a substantial tea was awaiting us. After discussing this in no uncertain fashion, the remainder of the evening was pleasantly passed in dancing with several well-rendered songs interspersed. Our Holywood friends deserve warm thanks for their successful efforts to give us an enjoyable outing.

Marriage.

ERVINE—ESDALE.—September 30th, at the Old Presbyterian Church, Larne, by the Rev. A. O. Ashworth, of Belfast, David, elder son of Samuel Ervine, Knock, to Sarah Elizabeth (Sadie), daughter of Ralph Esdale, Florida Street, Belfast.

Death.

SEMPLE.—At Church Street, Antrim, on October 10th, James Semple, formerly of Rickamore, Templepatrick. Interred in the Old Burying Ground, Templepatrick, October 12th.

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